

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-09 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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UNCLAS NEW DELHI 12366

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS IN

SUBJECT: JOINT INDO-AUSTRALIAN NAVAL EXERCISES

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO CALCUTTA MADRAS
FROM BOMBAY SEP 11 IS RPEATED

QUOTE

BOMBAY 2318

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, IN

SUBJ: JOINT INDO-AUSTRALIAN NAVAL EXERCISES

1. SPEAKING ABOARD THE HMAS GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER
HOBART ON SEPTEMBER 10, CAPTAIN P.R. SINCLAIR, COMMANDING
OFFICER OF THE SHIP, ANNOUNCED THAT INDIAN AND AUSTRALIAN
NAVAL VESSELS WILL CONDUCT JOINT EXERCISES IN THE ARABIAN
SEA SEPTEMBER 15 AND 16, "MARKING A NEW ERA OF CLOSER
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO FLEETS." ACCORDING TO PRESS
REPORTS, SINCLAIR STATED THAT THE JOINT EXERCISES WILL
INCLUDE GUNNERY FIRING, EXERCISES WITH AIRCRAFT, SHIP
MANUVERS, AND COMMUNICATIONS EXERCISES. THE EXERCISES
REPORTEDLY WILL BE CARRIED OUT UNDER INDIAN NAVAL COMMAND
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN BOMBAY AND COCHIN.

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2. ASKED IF THE JOINT EXERCISES MEAN CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INDIAN AND AUSTRALIAN NAVIES, SINCLAIR SAID THAT MOST AUSTRALIAN NAVAL BASES ARE PRESENTLY ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD, WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN BASES EXPECTED IN THREE YEARS. WHEN THAT HAPPENS, AUSTRALIA WOULD LIKE TO HAVE INDIAN SHIPS VISITING HER PORTS ON EXCHANGE GOODWILL VISITS. AUSTRALIA HAS A SPECIAL STAKE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, SINCLAIR REPORTEDLY STATED, AND HAS DECIDED TO GIVE MORE TIME TO THE AREA. SINCLAIR EXPLAINED THAT THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY MUST KEEP AUSTRALIAN TRADE ROUTES SAFE SINCE 99 PERCENT OF AUSTRALIAN EXPORTS AND IMPORTS ARE BY SEA.

3. AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER BRUCE GRANT WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT AUSTRALIA "IS VITALLY CONCERNED" THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN NOT BECOME AN AREA OF TENSION, AND THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HOPES THE MAJOR POWERS WILL "RATIONALIZE" THEIR RELATIONS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THAT LITTORAL STATES COOPERATE IN NAVAL MATTERS SO THAT THE SUPER POWERS NEED NOT INTERFERE. SIGNED BANE

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